18. (Original) A method of linking an item description to an item posted to an auction site, as recited in claim 17, wherein the pointer is a uniform resource locator.

5    19. (Original) A method of linking an item description to an item posted to an auction site, as recited in claim 17, wherein the encoded search information is in the form of ASCII codes for the readable text.

20. (Original) A method of linking an item description to an item posted to an auction site, as
10    recited in claim 17,
>    wherein the encoded search information is encrypted information; and
>    wherein the step of decoding the search information includes decrypting the search information.

15    21. (Currently Amended) A method of linking an item description to an item posted to an auction site, as recited in claim [21]17,
>    wherein the step of finding the linking item at the auction site includes searching for the item at the site using a search engine of the auction site.

20    22. (Currently Amended) A method of linking an item description to an item posted to an auction site, as recited in claim [21]17, wherein the step of posting the linking item to the site includes:
>    (a) obtaining actual item description data and actual item auction parameter data for the linking item;
>    (b) retrieving a stored item number, item key, user id and user password; and
25    (c) submitting to the site confirmation data that includes actual item description data, actual auction parameter data, the retrieved item number, retrieved item key, the user id and the user password to post the linking item for sale to the site.

23. (Original) A method of linking an item to an item posted to an auction site, comprising:
30    embedding a pointer to an auxiliary site in an item description of a linking item;

posting the linking item to the site;

finding the linking item at the auction site;

upon selection of the pointer, accessing the auxiliary site in an auxiliary window;

determining the identity of the user accessing the auxiliary site;

5      displaying search information for the posted item in the auxiliary window based on the

linking item and the determined identity of the user, the search information for the posted item

obtained from a database at the auxiliary site; and

upon selection of the search information for the posted item, invoking a search engine of

the auction site with the search information for the posted item as a search parameter to find the

10     posted item and item description on the auction site.


24. (Currently Amended) A method of linking an item to an item posted to an auction site, as

recited in claim [21]23, wherein the pointer is an HTML in-line frame tag.


15     25. (Currently Amended) A method of linking an item to an item posted to an auction site, as

recited in claim [21]23, wherein the step of finding the linking item at the auction site includes

searching for the item at the site using a search engine of the auction site.


26. (Currently Amended) A method of linking an item to an item posted to an auction site, as

20     recited in claim [21]23, wherein the step of posting the linking item to the site includes:

(a) obtaining actual item description data and actual item auction parameter data for the

linking item;

(b) retrieving a stored item number, item key, user id and user password; and

(c) submitting to the site confirmation data that includes actual item description data,

25     actual auction parameter data, the retrieved item number, retrieved item key, the user id and the

user password to post the linking item for sale to the site.


27. (New) A method of linking a first item to a second item at an auction site, comprising:

embedding encoded search information for the second item into a pointer to an auxiliary

30     site;

embedding the pointer in an item description of the first item;

posting the first item to the auction site;

finding the first item with the pointer at the auction site;

upon selection of the pointer, accessing the auxiliary site;

decoding the encoded search information into readable text at the auxiliary site; and

5          upon selection of the readable text, invoking a search engine of the auction site with the

decoded search information as a search parameter to find the second item and the second item's

description.

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